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RELIGION OF THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS.

BY PAUL RADIN.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE are always two factors to be considered in religion, — first, a specific feeling; and, secondly, certain beliefs, conceptions, customs, and acts associated with this feeling. Of these beliefs, perhaps the one most inextricably connected with the specific feeling is that in spirits, who are conceived of as more powerful than man, and as controlling all those elements in life on which he lays stress. These two component elements of religion may be regarded either as having always been associated and thus forming an inseparable whole, or the one as having preceded the other in time.

These beliefs play an important rôle with all people, but the importance of the specific feeling varies with each individual. The less intense the feeling, the greater, on the whole, will be the value attached to the beliefs, and the stricter will be the punctilious performance of custom and observance. The reverse is not true, however, for the greatest intensity of feeling is frequently known to accompany the observance of customs. Beliefs and customs, as such, contain no religious element. They belong to that large body of folkloristic elements toward which the individual and the group assume an attitude of passive acceptance. What makes certain of these beliefs part of the religious complex is their association with the specific religious feeling. It does not matter with what degree this feeling is held, or whether it is held by all the members of the group.

Religious feeling, however, is not a simple unit. It is accompanied by certain muscular responses, — the folding of the hands, the bowing of the head, the closing of the eyes; in short, by all external signs of mental and emotional concentration. Now, whether these various activities invariably condition religious feeling, and therefore constitute this state of mind, or *vice versa*, is a problem for the psychologists to

determine; but this much is true, that these various activities, performed at certain propitious times, do actually call forth religious feeling. On the other hand, we know that the folding of the hands and similar actions have become so entirely dissociated from religious feeling, that they are little better than stereotyped formulæ unaccompanied by the slightest thrill.

The discussion of the muscular responses accompanying religious feeling has brought us to a crucial question: Does the association of such muscular responses as have become stereotyped acts with certain beliefs, customs, etc., constitute the religious complex? I do not see how we can possibly deny the term "religion" to it; for the stereotyped acts were primarily associated with religious feeling, and only secondarily became dissociated. In other words, we shall in this case have to consider as a religious complex a complex in which one of the essential elements — the specific religious feeling — may be absent.

Let us now turn to an examination of the specific religious feeling. What I should call religious feeling is a far more than normal sensitiveness to certain beliefs, conceptions, and customs, that manifests itself in a thrill, a feeling of exhilaration, exaltation, awe, and in a complete absorption in internal sensations. Negatively it is characterized by a complete abeyance of external impressions. As a feeling, I should imagine that it differs very little from other feelings, such as the æsthetic or even the joy of living. What distinguishes it from them is the fact that it is called forth by entirely different elements.

A pure religious feeling is, however, exceedingly rare; for from the nature of the folkloristic background with which it has been associated, and from the nature of the rôle it plays in primitive man's life, it has become assimilated with almost all the other feelings possessed by man. With certain individuals, religious feeling may on almost all occasions dwarf other feelings; but with the vast majority of men and women it is but one among others, rising at times to a position of predominance, and more frequently being entirely displaced. Often it is artificial in the extreme to attempt any separation.

Let us now inquire into the nature of those beliefs, conceptions, and customs that have become part of the religious complex.

A cursory glance at the religious beliefs of peoples shows that almost any belief or custom can and has at different times become associated with religious feeling. This can be explained in only one way, — by regarding religion, not as a phenomenon apart and distinct from mundane life, not as a philosophical inquiry into the nature of being or as a group of concepts and acts that spring from the relation of the individual to the outer world, but, broadly speaking, as one of the most important and distinctive means of maintaining life-values. As these vary, so will the religious complex vary. In other words, religion

will only emphasize and preserve those values that are accepted by the majority of the group at any given time. Religion is thus closely connected with the whole life of man; and only when other means of emphasizing and maintaining life-values are in the ascendant, does it become divorced from the corporate life of the community. This divorce has never taken place among primitive man, and religion consequently permeates every phase of his culture. It does not, however, permeate every phase equally, with the same intensity, or with the same permanency; and in this variability lies, it seems to me, the possibility of discussing religion apart from all other aspects of the life of a group, as well as the possibility of separating the religion of one people from that of another.

In the midst of the variability of life-values, three stand out prominently and tenaciously; and they are success, happiness, and long life. In the same way there stands out, from the heterogeneous mass of beliefs, the belief in spirits who bestow success, happiness, and long life. These life-values are in no way inherently connected with the spirits, and may, we know, be obtained in another way; for instance, by magical rites. Our constant element is consequently the life-values. The association of these values with spirits may justifiably be regarded as secondary, and not as necessarily flowing from the nature of the spirit as originally conceived. Is it not, then, emphatically putting the cart before the horse to contend that "religion springs from the relation of the individual to the outer world (i.e., the spirits)?" Is it not just the converse that is true, that religion springs from the relation of the spirits to the life-values of man? In North America I am certain that this is the case.

While religion is thus concerned primarily with the important life-values of man, in stressing these it has been compelled, perforce, to include with them (because they form so important and integral a part of man's life) a large and variegated assortment of his folkloristic-magical background; and while the individual's attitude toward these is on the whole one of passivity, in their new setting there are occasions on which the religious feeling becomes diffused over these folkloristic-magical elements too.

If religion is thus so intimately connected with the stressing of life-values, it is essential to inquire carefully into the personnel of its carriers and the gradations of their religious intensity.

From the nature of religious feeling, it is quite evident that no one can be in this state continuously. In some individuals, however, it can be called up easily. These are the truly religious people. They are always few in number. From these to the totally unreligious person the gradations are numerous. If we were to arrange these gradations in the order of their religious intensity, we should have as the most

important the following: the truly religious, the intermittently religious, and the indifferently religious. The intermittently religious really fall into two groups, — those who may be weakly religious at almost any moment; and those who may be strongly religious at certain moments, such as temperamental upheavals and crises. In the intermittently and indifferently religious are included by far the large majority of people; but, since so many extra-religious factors enter into their religious consciousness, they are really the most poorly adapted for the study of religion. To understand religion and its development we must study those individuals who possess religious feeling in a marked degree. I believe that much of the confusion that exists in so many analyses of religion is due to the fact, that, in so far as these analyses are based on the study of distinct individuals, the individuals selected belonged to the class of intermittently or abnormally religious. Starting, then, from the markedly religious person, we should study the intermittently and the indifferently religious with reference to him.

It is not enough to realize the division of people into the three religious groups we have enumerated above: we have also to know when their religious feeling is called forth. Apart from the degree of religious susceptibility, we can legitimately claim that the members of all our three groups show a pronounced religious feeling at certain crises of life, and that these crises are intimately connected with all the important socio-economic life-values of the tribe, — puberty, sickness, death, famine, etc. The frequent existence on such occasions of temperamental upheavals is unquestionably a great aid in evoking a religious feeling. Whatever it be, however, it is during individual and tribal crises that the majority of men and women are possessed of what, in spite of other ingredients, is a religious thrill; and this religious thrill becomes instantaneously associated with definite beliefs, concepts, and customs, the most important of which is the belief in spirits and the necessity of their being brought into relation with man. There is nothing inherent in the religious thrill that would necessarily suggest an association with specific beliefs. That it does suggest them is due entirely to the influence of the early education the man has undergone.

It is, then, at crises that the majority of men obtain their purest religious feeling, because it is at such times only that they perhaps are most prone to permit inward feelings to dominate. It is only at crises, however, that the majority of men obtain a pure religious feeling at all. The markedly religious man is quite different. A certain temperamental susceptibility permits him to obtain a religious thrill on innumerable occasions; and since with each thrill are associated the specific religious beliefs, etc., he sees the entire content of

life from a religious viewpoint. Life and its values as determined by his traditional background are, of course, primary; and the function religion assumes is that of emphasizing and maintaining these life-values. The intermittently and indifferently religious are taught and accept unhesitatingly, as far as they comprehend it, the religious complex of the religious. They assuredly rarely see life from a religious standpoint. There are occasions, however, in the corporate life of a community, — such as a ceremony or ritual, — where a religious feeling does at times seem to be diffused over the entire content of life. Certainly even the intermittently and indifferently religious who participate in these activities must partake somewhat of this feeling too. At a ceremony many of the conditions favorable to the calling-forth of a religious feeling are given, — the presence of truly religious people and of acts and customs associated with religious feeling; the condition of detachment from the outer world; and, lastly, the very important fact that an individual has been taught to expect a religious thrill there.

Summing up, we may say that all people are spontaneously religious at crises; that markedly religious people are spontaneously religious on numerous other occasions; and that the intermittently and indifferently religious are secondarily religious on a number of occasions not connected with crises.

One of the most important points in the study of religion is to know where to begin the inquiry. It has been customary, whether we are conscious of this fact or not, to treat the subject as though each generation evolved its religion anew. We admit the inheritance of the cultural background in theory, but make no use of it in practice. The general impression conveyed by the discussions is that to each generation the problems of religion present themselves for solution. This lack of correspondence between theory and practice seems to me due to the fact that we do not begin our investigations at some definite point in the concrete data at our disposal. It is absolutely essential, however, to have a starting-point; and there is, it seems to me, only one logical and historical starting-point, namely, the relation of a youth to the preceding generation in the persons of his immediate family. If we know what an individual, in the formative years of his life, has learned of the objective and subjective content of religion from his immediate relatives, and how the latter have moulded his religious nature, we are on firm ground.

In the transmission of the religious complex, two important points are to be considered, — first that from the nature of the age at which youths are generally taught the objective contents of religion, which embraces the years from ten to fourteen, all individuals must begin with an attitude of unhesitating acceptance of their traditional back-

ground, with all its implications; and, secondly, that the appearance of religious feeling is subsequent to the acquisition of that mass of beliefs, concepts, and customs, with which in adult life it is inextricably interwoven. In the emotionally formative period of life, the individual is taught the socio-economic importance of being religious; and what becomes the traditional religious background in later life, becomes endeared to him in earlier life for reasons extraneous to religion, — through family ties and affection, through personal ambition, etc. He obtains all this before he has experienced any intense religious emotion. If, consequently, we wish to understand the religious complex, we shall have to bear in mind clearly the historical order of development of its component elements and stresses.

Before entering on the discussion of North American religion proper, a few words on the relation of magic and religion may not be out of place.

The distinction which we wish to make between religion and magic is a very simple one. It is concerned principally with the nature of the subjective attitude. In religion this attitude is positive and definite; while in magic it is negative and indefinite, and may be said to consist mainly in the feeling that certain facts will occur together. The objective content of religion and magic, while differing in many ways, is frequently the same. The resemblances are due, in my opinion, to two facts, — first, because religion and magic are primarily concerned with the same things, namely, the maintenance of life-values (although here the range of magic is more restricted than that of religion); and, secondly, because quite a number of the elements that form a part of the magical complex have become secondarily included in the religious complex.

CRITIQUE OF SOURCES.

Religion has never been made a special subject of inquiry in North America; and practically all the accessible data are to be found in the general accounts of tribes, in mythologies, and in specific studies of ceremonies. However, even in the best of the studies at our disposal, what is specifically dealt with is not religion in its entirety, but religious practices and observances. The nature of religious feeling and its rôle have rarely been dwelt upon, except in connection with the discussion of the concept of magical power (*orenda*, *wakanda*, *manito*, etc.). Frequently, too, even in the best descriptions of the religion of a certain tribe, we are at a loss to know whether it is the Indian's viewpoint that is given, or an ethnologist's conception of that viewpoint. Even when we have satisfied ourselves that we are essentially dealing with an Indian's viewpoint, we rarely know what Indian's viewpoint, — whether it is the shaman's or the layman's, that of a religious or of an essentially unreligious person.

The raw material for the study of the subjective side of religion is given to a certain extent in the myths, especially in the ritualistic myths. These are generally merely personal religious experiences cast in a literary mould. They naturally leave much to be desired. One of the ideal methods for acquiring data relating to the subjective side of religion is to obtain "spiritual" autobiographies. These are not difficult to obtain in many parts of North America, owing to the not uncommon use of modern syllabic alphabets. In addition, great emphasis should be placed on securing verbatim, or at least approximately complete, accounts of speeches given at ceremonies or on other occasions of a religious nature, for they often throw an admirably clear light on the subjective aspects of our subject.

Unfortunately, in addition to certain defects in the nature of our available material, we have to reckon with a serious gap in our knowledge of certain tribes. This is conspicuously true for the interior Athapascan tribes, for many of the tribes included in the Plateau area, for almost all the Shoshonean, and for a large number of the Southeastern tribes. For the Southeastern area a large mass of material has recently been collected by Dr. Swanton, but it still awaits publication. A peculiar condition exists with regard to the data on the Southwest. While our published sources of information are by no means small, the material, except in the case of the Navajo, Pawnee, and Hopi, is presented in such a confused way that it is frequently extremely difficult to use.

METHOD OF EXPOSITION.

The difficulties in the way of an adequate presentation of so complex a phenomenon as religion are well known. For purposes of description it is necessary to separate our subject into a number of definite, often enough artificial units; and yet it is essential to hold these units together in a close nexus. At the same time, to treat religion statically is manifestly one-sided, and likely to lead to many misinterpretations. It is, then, at all times necessary to bear in mind that we are dealing with a dynamic phenomenon. Finally, we must remember that we are dealing with an historical group, and that we must endeavor, even in spite of our unfortunate lack of historical sources, to utilize those contemporary sources in our possession in such a way that the religious complex as a whole, and the religious conceptions, beliefs, and customs in particular, are interpreted in the light of their probable development.

For the reasons given above, it has seemed best to present our subject under the headings suggested by our definition of religion. We shall accordingly treat religion under the following topics:¹—

¹ It might be well to state that the writer is personally acquainted with two tribes, — the Winnebago and the Ojibwa. His analysis of religion naturally started with data secured from them.

Introductory: Religion as a shamanistic interpretation.

I. The specifically religious concepts.

1. The concept of supernatural power.
2. The concept of spirits.
3. The power and localization of spirits.
4. The development of spirits into deities.
5. Monotheism.

II. The relation of spirits to man.

1. The twofold interpretation of this relation.
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III. The methods of bringing spirits into relation with man.

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IV. The folkloristic-religious complex.

1. The concept of evil.
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4. The concept of the soul.

V. The transmission of the religious complex.

INTRODUCTORY: RELIGION AS A SHAMANISTIC INTERPRETATION.

Among the North American Indians emphasis was naturally laid upon different aspects of life in different parts of the country. The purely hunting and fishing tribes, with a loose social and ceremonial organization, were bound to have a religious complex quite distinct in certain ways from that of the Plains Indians or the agricultural and sedentary tribes of the Southeast and Southwest. Throughout America, as in other parts of the world, man has always asked for two things, — success and long life. The kind of success he desired would naturally depend upon what, in his culture, was considered of value, and also upon individual temperament. Man was accordingly to conduct himself in the manner which would conform best to the conditions necessary for the attainment of his specific life-values. These conditions were more or less precisely given by the preceding generation as interpreted by the elders of that generation.

From the point of view of the elders, a man's life might be separated into a number of divisions of prime significance both to the community and to the individual. These are birth, adolescence, old age, death, future life, etc. To what extent these different periods of life are religiously as well as socially emphasized, varies with different tribes.

In the life of the individual, irrespective of any observance associated with these periods, certain events will take place at the age of adolescence and early manhood, for instance, around which a religious feeling clusters. These events are generally of two kinds, — one that might be called positive, and one negative. As illustrations of the first kind might be given such events as the first killing of a food-animal or the first killing of an enemy, the acquisition of a new name, the first enjoyment of products of the field, etc. As illustrations of the second kind might be given such occurrences as lack of success in one's undertakings, the presence of dilemmas and crises, where the question arises, "What am I to do?" It is at this point that the religious feeling arises most easily and is felt most deeply, according to the available data at our disposal. It is quite natural that it should, for it is on such occasions that there exist a pronounced desire for success and a willingness to put one's self in a condition by which success may be achieved. According to the theory of the shamans, complete absorption in the religious feeling is the essential requirement; but with this essential requirement there has come to be associated, through an historical growth directed by the shaman, a belief in spirits more powerful than man, who control success.

The predication of the religious feeling as essential to success, and the association of this feeling with spirits who are also conceived of as essential to success, flow neither from the nature of the feeling nor from that of the spirits. In North America, at least, it is a theory and an interpretation of the religious man, the shaman. I do not mean to imply that the shaman has necessarily established this association; but it seems highly probable that he has analyzed the entire complex, and has given an interpretation of the relation of the religious feeling to success in life and to the belief in spirits. This interpretation is accepted uncritically and unhesitatingly by the other members of the tribe.

How thoroughly concerned this theory is with the accentuation and preservation of specific life-values, is made plain by the following excerpt from the Winnebago system of instructions: —

"My son, when you grow up, you should try to be of some benefit to your fellowmen. There is only one way in which this can be done, and that is to fast. . . . If you thirst yourself to death, the spirits who are in control of wars will bless you. . . . But, my son, if you do not fast repeatedly, it

will be all in vain that you inflict sufferings upon yourself. Blessings are not obtained except by making the proper offerings to the spirits, and by putting yourself, time and again, in the proper mental condition. . . . If you do not obtain a spirit to strengthen you, you will amount to nothing in the estimation of your fellowmen, and they will show you little respect. . . . My son, as you travel along life's path, you will find many narrow passages [i. e., crises], and you can never tell when you will come to them. Try to anticipate these, so that you will be endowed with sufficient strength [by obtaining powers from the spirits] to pass safely through these narrow passages."

Certainly we have here a markedly materialistic conception quite in contrast to the formulation of the relation of God to man in the Semitic religions. In the latter religions man is admonished to put himself in an attitude of thankfulness and veneration for the deity who has created him and this world. In the religion of the Indians, even where the idea of creation is markedly developed, there is no trace of any such attitude. Prayers and offerings are not made to the spirits in order to glorify them: they are made in order to obtain something very definite; and, as we shall see, the blessings they bestow are not made because of their love of mankind, but because they have received offerings. In theory they may at times refuse these offerings, but in practice this rarely happens. Having once accepted the offerings, the spirits must grant man the powers they possess. They practically become automatons, and their relation to man becomes mechanical.

So much for the formulation of the shamanistic theory. Let us turn now to the presentation and examination of the specifically religious concepts with which the shaman deals.

I. THE SPECIFICALLY RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS.

I. THE CONCEPT OF SUPERNATURAL POWER. — In North America the shamanistic theory is a purely animistic one. The main characteristics of the spirits or spiritual beings which the theory predicates is that the spirits are non-human and more powerful than man. The question as to whether they are anthropomorphic or not seems to be of comparatively small consequence. When seen or conceived of as acting, there is unquestionably a well-marked tendency to describe them either as anthropomorphic or as theromorphic beings. This is particularly true of those spirits who play a rôle in mythology. In spite of this, there is ample evidence to show that the Indians were very little interested in the form under which their spirits were conceived, without, however, making them any the less definite. The lack of definiteness in form has led a number of ethnologists in America and elsewhere to postulate the existence, in America, of a

"spirit-force" or magic power. Mr. J. N. B. Hewitt was perhaps the first to discuss it among the North American Indians, and his conclusions seemed to be corroborated by the studies of Miss Fletcher among the Omaha, and by those of William Jones among the Central Algonkin. Falling in, as it did, so admirably with conclusions that had been reached by a number of European ethnological theorists, in particular Mr. R. R. Marett, it soon obtained great currency. In the last expression on the religion of the Indians, that of Professor Boas,¹ it is assumed as fundamental.

Professor Boas says as follows: "The fundamental concept bearing on the religious life of the individual is the belief in the existence of magic power, which may influence the life of man, and which in turn may be influenced by human activity. In this sense magic power must be understood as the wonderful qualities which are believed to exist in objects, animals, men, spirits, or deities, and which are superior to the natural qualities of man. This idea of magic power is one of the fundamental concepts that occur among all Indian tribes. It is what is called *manito* by the Algonquian tribes; *wakanda*, by the Siouan tribes; *orenda*, by the Iroquois; *sulia*, by the Salish; *naualak*, by the Kwakiutl; and *tamanoas*, by the Chinook. Notwithstanding slight differences in the signification of these terms, the fundamental notion of all of them is that of a power inherent in the objects of nature which is more potent than the natural powers of man. . . . Since the belief in the existence of magic powers is very strong in the Indian mind, all his actions are regulated by the desire to retain the good will of those friendly to him, and to control those that are hostile."

The concept of magic power has assumed such prominence in discussions on American religion, that I feel justified in dwelling on it here in some detail, particularly as I wish to demonstrate that in the form in which it is generally presented it is quite untenable.

From Professor Boas's definition of magical power, one might infer at first that he is really dealing with an interpretation of magic. However, as he distinctly says that "man's actions are regulated by the desire to retain the good will of these powers," we shall have to assume that this power is identical with the "outer world" of his definition of religion.

The first question that suggests itself for discussion is, In what way is magical power related to spirits? According to Professor Boas, spirits represent the magic power of nature individualized; and the variation in the conception of spirits, that exists in different parts of America, is due to differences in the degree of individualization they have undergone. Where strong anthropomorphic individualization

¹ "Religion," in Handbook of American Indians (Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30, Part 2).

has occurred, we have deities; and where a belief in magic power that is vaguely localized is pronounced, we have the "concept of a deity or of a great spirit which is hardly anthropomorphic in character."

Miss Fletcher formulates her conception of magic power in a different way. According to her, "*Wakonda* . . . is the name given to the mysterious all-pervading and life-giving power to which certain anthropomorphic aspects are attributed," and "is also applied to objects or phenomena regarded as sacred or mysterious. These two uses of the word are never confused in the minds of the thoughtful. When during his fast the Omaha sings, '*Wakonda*, here needy he stands, and I am he!' his address is to 'the power that moves,' 'causes to move,' that is, gives life. . . . To the Omaha nothing is without life. . . . He projects his own consciousness upon all things, and ascribes to them experiences and characteristics with which he is familiar; there is to him something in common between all creatures and all natural forms, a something which brings them into existence and holds them intact; this something he conceives of as akin to his own conscious being. The power which thus brings to pass and holds all things in their living form he designates as *wakonda*. . . . *Wakonda* is invisible, and therefore allied to the idea of spirit. Objects seen in dreams or visions partake of the idea or nature of spirit, and when these objects speak to man in answer to his entreaty, the act is possible because of the power of *wakonda*, and the object, be it thunder-cloud, animal, or bird, seen and heard by the dreamer, may be spoken of by him as a *wakonda*, but he does not mean that they are *wakonda*. The association in which the term *wakonda* is used determines the character of its meaning. *Wakonda*, the power addressed during the fast, . . . is not the same *wakonda* as the thunder that speaks to a man in a dream is sometimes called; yet there is a relation between the two, not unlike that signified by the term *wakondagi* when applied to the first manifestation of an ability; for all power, whether shown in the thunder-storm, the hurricane, the animals, or man, is of *wakonda*.'" ¹

I think it is quite plain from the above that Miss Fletcher is not dealing with power at all, but with a kind of Semitic deity conceived of inconsistently, sometimes as an all-pervading principle of life, sometimes as a definite spirit.

Still another interpretation is that given by Mr. Hewitt in the discussion of the Iroquoian *orenda*. According to him, *Orenda* is a "magic power which was assumed . . . to be inherent in every body . . . and in every personified attribute, property, or activity. . . . This hypothetic principle was conceived to be immaterial, occult, impersonal, mysterious in mode of action. . . . The possession of

¹ Article "Wakonda" (Handbook of American Indians, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30, Part 2).

orenda . . . is the distinctive characteristic of all the gods, and these gods in earlier time were all the bodies and beings of nature in any manner affecting the weal or woe of man."¹

Mr. Hewitt, in another article,² tells us that "primitive man interpreted the activities of nature to be the ceaseless struggle of one orenda against another, uttered and directed by the beings or bodies of his environment, the former possessing orenda, and the latter, life, mind, and orenda, only by virtue of his own imputation. . . . In the stress of life coming into contact with certain bodies of his environment more frequently than with the other environing bodies, and learning from these constraining relations to feel that these bodies, through the exercise of their orenda, controlled the conditions of his welfare and in like manner shaped his ill-fare, he came gradually to regard these bodies as the masters, the gods, of his environment, whose aid, goodwill, and even existence were absolutely necessary to his well-being and his preservation of life itself. . . . And the story of the operations of orenda becomes the history of the gods."

Mr. Hewitt claims to base his conclusions on an analysis of a large number of phrases in which the expression "*orenda*" is found; but any one who will take the trouble to examine these expressions, and to compare the translation he gives with the interpretation of the translation, can see at a glance that he is illegitimately extending the meaning of these words. The conclusions are palpably not based on his analysis of these words; but, on the contrary, the analysis of the words is based on a certain concept of *orenda* that is held.

Let us see what is at the bottom of this concept of *orenda*. I believe this is to be found in the phrase, "the possession of *orenda* is the distinctive characteristic of all the gods." The gods have been separated into beings plus magical powers, and it has then been forgotten that they belong together and cannot be treated as though they were independent of each other. It seems to me, however, that the error lies in the separation itself. What warrant have we for thinking of the god as a deity plus power, and not merely as a powerful deity? Are we not here really at the bottom of the whole matter? And are we not committing the old error of confusing an adjective with a noun? I think there is no doubt of it. Mr. Hewitt, in fact, has presented us, not with certain facts, but with an interpretation of facts. What the facts themselves are, we have no means of determining from his data.

Dr. Jones's conception of the *manito*³ is essentially the same as Mr. Hewitt's conception of the *orenda*. To him the *manito* "is an unsystematic belief in a cosmic, mysterious property, which is believed

¹ "Orenda" (Handbook of American Indians, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30, Part 2).

² "Orenda and a Definition of Religion" (American Anthropologist, N. S., vol. iv).

³ "The Algonkin Manitou" (Journal of American Folk-Lore, vol. xviii).

to exist everywhere in nature. . . . The conception of this something wavers between that of a communicable property, that of a mobile, invisible substance, and that of a latent transferable energy; . . . this substance, property, or energy is conceived as being widely diffused amongst natural objects and human beings; . . . the presence of it is promptly assigned as the explanation of any unusual power or efficacy which any object or person is found to possess; . . . it is a distinct and rather abstract conception of a diffused, all-pervasive, invisible, manipulable, and transferable life-energy, or universal force. . . . [Finally] all success, strength, or prosperity is conceived to depend upon the possession of [this force]."

Dr. Jones, like Mr. Hewitt and, as we shall see, Dr. Swanton, lays considerable stress upon language, "as affording means of approaching nearer to a definition of this religious sentiment." He says, "When they [the Indians] refer to the manitou in the sense of a virtue, a property, an abstraction, they employ the form expressive of inanimate gender. When the manitou becomes associated with an object, then the gender becomes less definite." Jones here seems to accept the assumption that grammatical distinctions correspond to psychological ones. It is clear, however, quite apart from the general incorrectness of this assumption, that the gender of Algonkin words depends frequently on analogy. We do not know with what words "manitou" is used in an "inanimate" sense; and until we do, and have been able to satisfy ourselves that these words have not become inanimate through analogy, Jones's linguistic argument lends no corroboration to his contentions.

Although I am firmly convinced that such use of the linguistic data as Jones, Swanton, and in the main Hewitt, have made, is both illegitimate and futile, there is no gainsaying the fact that a discussion and an examination of the roots used in describing religious concepts may prove of great importance.

Let us now, before summing up, pass to Dr. Swanton's view of supernatural power. He seems to rely entirely upon the linguistic argument, interpreting language likewise, in the same manner as Dr. Jones. "Most Indian languages,"¹ he says, "at any rate the Tlingit, do not have a true plural, but usually a distributive and occasionally a collective. *This means that instead of thinking of so many different objects, they think of one diffused into many.* Therefore they do not divide the universe arbitrarily into so many different quarters ruled by so many supernatural beings. On the contrary, supernatural power impresses them as a vast immensity, one in kind and impersonal, inscrutable as to its nature, but wherever manifesting itself to men

¹ J. R. Swanton, "Condition, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationships of the Tlingit Indians" (26th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, p. 451, note).

taking a personal and it might be said a human personal form in whatever object it displays itself. Thus the sky-spirit is the ocean of supernatural energy as it manifests itself in the sky, the sea-spirit as it manifests itself in the sea. . . . It is not meant that the Tlingit consciously reasons this out thus or formulates a unity in the supernatural, but such appears to be his unexpressed feeling. For this reason there is but one name for this spiritual power, *yĕk*, a name which is affixed to any specific personal manifestation of it, and it is to this perception or feeling reduced to personality that the great-spirit idea seems usually to have affixed itself."

I think that it is apparent, from the quotations given above, that in no case are we dealing with a clear presentation of certain facts, but with interpretations. The facts themselves are rarely given as such, and, when they are given, are so closely bound up with the specific interpretation advanced, that they can be used only with the greatest caution. If we were dealing with a general analysis of religion from a logical or metaphysical standpoint, perhaps all that would be required would be the inner consistency of the explanation advanced; but we are not concerned with that. All that we wish to know are certain facts and the Indians' interpretation of them, and this our authorities on magical power have signally failed to give us. Quite apart, therefore, from the fact that there is abundant evidence to show that they have generally approached the subject from a preconceived European metaphysical viewpoint (whether they have done this consciously or not is immaterial), the premises of which it is legitimate to examine, we are compelled to reject their data because they have confused interpretations with facts.

However, I do not wish to rest my rejection of a belief in magical power, as presented by the writers quoted above, on this negative evidence. I was fortunate enough to work among the Winnebago and Ojibwa, where the belief in *wakanda* and *manito* is strongly and characteristically developed. In both tribes the term always referred to definite spirits, not necessarily definite in shape. If at a vapor-bath the steam is regarded as *wakanda* or *manito*, it is because it is a spirit transformed into steam for the time being; if an arrow is possessed of specific virtues, it is because a spirit has either transformed himself into the arrow or because he is temporarily dwelling in it; and, finally, if tobacco is offered to a peculiarly-shaped object, it is because either this object belongs to a spirit, or a spirit is residing in it. The terms "*wakanda*" and "*manito*" are often used in the sense of "sacred." If a Winnebago tells you that a certain thing is *waka* (i.e., sacred), further inquiry will elicit from him the information that it is so because it belongs to a spirit, was given by a spirit, or was in some way connected with a spirit. It is possible

that Dr. Jones, Miss Fletcher, and Mr. Hewitt interpreted a certain vagueness in the answer, or a certain inability (or unwillingness) to discuss objects that were regarded as *manito* or *wakanda*, as pertaining to the nature of sacred. In addition to the connotation of "sacred," *wakanda* and *manito* also have the meaning "strange," "remarkable," "wonderful," "unusual," and "powerful," without, however, having the slightest suggestion of "inherent power," but having the ordinary sense of those adjectives.

Is it not possible, however, that the idea of a force inherent in the universe may have been developed by shamanistic systematization? It is possible; but no data pointing to this exist, as far as I know, in North America. In some cases the shamans have thought away all the personal characteristics; but an "unpersonal" unit still exists, set off against other "unpersonal" units. This is not magical power; for, according to our authorities, it is not divisible, but forms one unit. Even if, finally, we were to interpret *wakanda* and *manito* as in the nature of a *tertium quid*, that the personal characteristics were not thought away from them, but that they never possessed them, the individuality of each *tertium quid* would still prevent it from corresponding to magical power.

We may say, then, that from an examination of the data customarily relied upon as proof, and from individual data obtained, there is nothing to justify the postulation of a belief in a universal force in North America. Magical power as an "essence" existing apart and separate from a definite spirit, is, we believe, an unjustified assumption, an abstraction created by investigators.¹

There is another way in which we may look upon the idea of a universal force, and that is to regard it as the unconscious expression of the religious emotion itself. It should be looked upon, in other words, as the non-individualized feeling of fear, awe, etc., which forms the subjective side of religion. It is this, perhaps, upon which Jones insists in certain passages of his essay. From this point of view, the answer given by an Indian to any question presupposes a certain amount of reflection on his part, and cannot, therefore, be regarded as a true expression of the religious emotion. If, consequently, by "force" we wish to designate simply the religious emotion as such, no issue need be taken with the concept. However, this is not what the majority of theorists mean by the term. Quite apart from this consideration, are we justified in separating the religious emotion from its associated historical elements? And does not the admittedly individual object or happening which becomes associated with the religious emotion, in a way, individualize the entire

¹ In the discussion of the nature of the spirits, a number of points come out, of considerable importance in connection with the notion of supernatural power, and to this readers are referred.

complex? It is of course well-nigh impossible to determine this satisfactorily; but it seems to me that the individual, in the vast majority of cases, does not content himself with the mere pleasure of "swimming" in a vague religious emotion, but almost mechanically individualizes the emotion by reference to the facts he has been taught.

2. THE CONCEPT OF SPIRITS. — Animism, then, in the old Tylorian sense of the term, is the belief of the Indians. What, however, is the nature of these spirits with which animism deals? It has frequently been urged that spirits must of necessity be conceived of in a vague manner by the majority of Indians; but this seems to me an entirely erroneous view, due to lack of analysis of the answers received from direct questioning of the Indian. To those Indians who have never spent any time thinking upon the nature of spirits, the concept of spirit is neither vague nor definite, for they cannot really be said to have any concept at all. The question has really never presented itself to them. When, therefore, an ethnologist seeks by direct questioning to inquire into the nature of spirits from the ordinary lay Indian, he is likely to obtain an answer (in those cases where he obtains an answer at all) prompted by a moment's consideration. Such an answer no more reflects the true conception of spirits than a reply concerning the Holy Ghost, obtained under the same conditions, from an illiterate peasant, would reflect the Catholic belief on this subject. There is no reason for even supposing that such an answer reflects the same Indian's belief after he has given the subject some consideration. The vagueness present in our lay Indian's answer is consequently not an indication of vagueness in the conception of spirits, but is due to entirely different reasons. This distinction is of the utmost importance.

While, however, this ignorance as to the precise nature of the spirits, on the part of the ordinary man, is a fact to be borne in mind, to understand the Indian's conception of spirits, we must inquire principally from those who have thought upon the question, and who have inherited the thoughts of others upon this question, — the shamans. What has the shaman to say upon the nature of spirits? Are they anthropomorphic, theromorphic, dream-phantasms, or indefinite entities in general? Can we divide them into personal, impersonal, or unpersonal spirits? Right here, it seems to me, we are apt to make an unjustifiable assumption. Our ordinary division into personal and impersonal is made on the possession of corporeal characteristics, which are in turn dependent upon our sense-perceptions, — sight, hearing, touch etc. Ordinarily, too, the presence or absence of corporeality is the test of its reality or unreality. What right have we, however, to assume that the Indian either makes the same classification or equates corporeality with reality, with

existence? To judge from specific inquiries made among the Winnebago and Ojibwa, and from much of our data in general, reality does not depend necessarily upon sense-impressions. Among the Winnebago shamans, what is thought of, what is felt, what is spoken, is as real as what is seen or heard. It is, I believe, a fact that future investigations will thoroughly confirm, that the Indian does not make the separation into personal as contrasted with impersonal, corporeal with impersonal, in our sense at all. What he seems to be interested in is the question of existence, of reality; and everything that is perceived by the sense, thought of, felt and dreamt of, exists. It follows, consequently, that most of the problems connected with the nature of spirit as personal or impersonal do not exist.

Because, however, the Indian is thus essentially interested in the existence of things, it does not follow that he classifies the universe into that which exists and that which does not exist. Whatever is the object of his thoughts and his feelings exists. He does not concern himself with the negative aspects of existence. The questions with which he concerns himself, by preference, are those relating to the kind and the permanency of the existence of spirits. Far more important than these two questions, however, is the question relating to the authority for the existence of spirits.

Before entering into this discussion, a few words on the respective rôles of the shaman and the layman may not be out of place.

That the shaman works with the general folkloristic material on hand is self-evident. To a large extent, therefore, he must be regarded as a mere arranger and synthesizer. But he is also an interpreter and a theorizer; and in the exercise of these capacities he is only in part limited by the interpretations and theories known to the mass of the people. When we remember the special religious aptitude that characterizes the more capable of the shamans, it must be quite plain to us that he will actually invent new interpretations and new theories, and that his individuality will stamp itself indelibly upon the new syntheses he attempts. If we regard religion as the association of a religious emotion with certain concepts and folkloristic elements, then it is essential to realize exactly how the religious emotion may be extended to new folkloristic elements. It is just in this connection, it seems to me, that the rôle of the shaman shows itself. It is he that extends them.

If we survey the whole field of North America, we shall find that spirits are conceived of as being visible, audible, felt emotionally, or as manifesting their existence by some sign or result. They are all equally real. When visible, they may appear as human beings, animals, "mythological" animals, rocks, trees, fire, phantasms, etc.; when audible, it may be as a human voice, or as the voice of a bird,

in the form of a song, in the whistling of the wind, the crackling of the fire; when manifesting their presence by a sign, it may be by lightning, by a cloud, by an object found, etc. How a spirit vouchsafes to manifest himself to an individual may to a certain extent vary with the particular individual; for it probably depends upon the predominance of visual images in one case, and auditory images in another. However, in the vast majority of instances the particular manner of manifestation is given. As might be expected, a large number of spirits are believed to be visible to man.

A large number of spirits are distinctly and definitely corporeal. As such they may be definitely anthropomorphic, theromorphic, etc. We shall first examine the anthropomorphic spirits.

The North American Indians have peopled their universe with spirits, who may be defined, we have said, as being more powerful than and as real as man. The lay Indian, we have pointed out, does not concern himself with the nature or the shape of spirits at all. Both the lay Indian and the shaman, however, when speaking of spirits as directly related to the activities of man, must from the nature of the case have generally conceived him as acting similarly to the principal sentient beings with which he was mainly concerned, — man and animals. In general, these anthropomorphic characteristics would be vaguely defined; but when, owing to shamanistic activity, the powers and nature of spirits were more sharply drawn, then the spirits took upon themselves more definitely the shape of man or of some animal. Whether anthropomorphic, theromorphic, or indeterminate spirits predominate, varies in different parts of America. In the Northwest coast, the Plains, and the Southwest areas, anthropomorphic spirits largely predominate; while in the Woodland and Southeast areas they do not seem to be of any more importance than either the theromorphic or the indeterminate spirits. Among the Plateau Indians and those of the interior and northern Canada, indeterminate spirits are largely in the majority. Analyzing the distribution of anthropomorphic spirits, it seems fairly clear that they are most abundant in those areas in which a ritualistic organization is well developed. In the Woodland and Southeast areas, where this, and its invariable accompaniment shamanistic systematization, are found only in certain places, anthropomorphism plays only a moderately important rôle; whereas in the Northwest, on the Plains, and in the Southwest, where the ritualistic organization is complex, the converse is true.

Among the Pueblo Indians the anthropomorphic character of spirits or deities has developed from the influence of two features, — one being the reconstructions of the shamans, which are analogous to what has taken place on the Northwest coast and the Plains; and the other being what might be called a “deification” of clan-ancestors. Dr.

Fewkes speaks of the second feature as ancestor-worship. To him the kadcina cult, for instance, is a phase of ancestor-worship; and the kadcinas, "deified spirits of ancestors." In this he is followed by Mrs. Stevenson; but only by a peculiar, and to me illegitimate, extension of the concept ancestor-worship, is this true. As a matter of fact, what we are dealing with here is not ancestor-worship, but the not uncommon transformation of an heroic animal into a man who becomes the ancestor of the clan. This belief, so characteristically developed among the Winnebago, Sauk and Fox, and Omaha, has taken a different turn among the Hopi and other Pueblo tribes. Among the latter, the animal ancestry of the clan founder has been completely lost sight of, and consequently the kadcinas seem to have taken upon themselves the nature of anthropomorphic beings or ancestors who were worshipped. That we are not dealing with deified ancestors comes out clearly from what Dr. Fewkes says about "animate" totems. "When the totems are inanimate, — as sun, water, lightning, corn, — the clan totem ancestors are likewise anthropomorphic, and their worship the central idea of the cult."¹

It would be erroneous to imagine that the shaman has consistently or completely interpreted or systematized, or brought into harmony with itself, the vast magico-folkloristic background which forms, after all, the matrix of the religious complex. First of all, the task was far beyond his powers; and, secondly, this complex was changing continually as it passed through the hands of the lay Indian, and as new elements were added to it from the inexhaustible magico-folkloristic background. It is to this lack of complete systematization that is due at times the uncertainty as to the nature of spirits. We frequently do not know whether we are dealing with an anthropomorphic or a theromorphic spirit. As an example we might take the thunder-bird among the Winnebago. In the popular belief in the clan legends, it is always spoken of and depicted as a bird akin to the eagle. In the shamanistic religion the thunder-birds are theoretically bald-headed anthropomorphic beings. Frequently, however, although they are spoken of as men, they act as birds. Complete as has been the shamanistic transformation of the bird into a man, the spirit has still kept two of the old characteristics of the thunder-bird concept, — the baldness of the birds, and the flashing of the eyes as the cause of lightning.

In one other way did the shaman seem powerless to withstand the influence of the popular beliefs. When spirits of a definitely circumscribed type were developed, one of the first and most natural reactions to be expected was that the people would elevate to the rank of spirits those heroes and hero-buffoons so dear to the popular mind. The

¹ *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, vol. xi, pp. 173-194.

shamans, it would seem, fought against this tendency, to judge from the utter lack of unanimity regarding the status of these popular spirits in North America; but this did not prevent the raven among the Bellacoola, the hare, trickster, and turtle among the Winnebago, Wisaka among the Sauk and Fox, Nenebojo among the Ojibwa, etc., from becoming *bona fide* spirits. Upon their inclusion in the pantheon of spirits, the shaman did his best to obliterate their more grossly animal characteristics; and, though he could not change the animal form of many of these hero-spirits, he did succeed in making them either indeterminate or at least human animals.

Under the present discussion belongs properly also that of the High God, for he is generally conceived of as markedly anthropomorphic; but, owing to its importance, we shall discuss this conception separately.

If we except the heroic animals who have developed into spirits, theromorphic spirits are by no means common. There exists, however, another class of spirit characteristically developed among the Winnebago and kindred tribes, among the Ojibwa and Sauk and Fox, and among some of the Plains Indians, who is regarded as a spirit controlling the living species of animals. Among the Winnebago this spirit seems to possess no corporeality at all. He is a generalized, clarified animal. He, for example, it is who is the guardian spirit, not the specific animal. There is no doubt in my mind that this conception is largely, if not entirely, a shamanistic one. It plays an important part in Winnebago life, for it permits an individual to kill any animal without running the risk of killing either his guardian spirit or his clan animal. This spirit-animal is distinguished from, let us say, the anthropomorphized hare of the Winnebago Medicine Dance, in that he does not represent the gradual development of a benevolent spirit out of an heroic buffoon animal, but simply a newly-created abstraction of the shaman, based, it is true, on an animal prototype.

A large number of spirits are indeterminate in shape. The reasons for this seem to be, that the object with which the spirit is associated has no definite shape; that its shape, while definite, has been discarded; that they are creations of the popular fancy; or that, finally, they are in a more or less constant state of transformation.

To the first class belong such spirits as water, fire, light, wind, etc., on the one hand; and those spirits whose existence is made known by sounds or signs, on the other. Among the Winnebago, water is addressed as, "thou whose body is of water." Nothing more definite is ever given. For those spirits who manifest themselves only by sound and signs, I have definite information only from the Winnebago and Ojibwa, though there is reason to believe that they also exist among the other tribes belonging to the Woodland area and to the territory just west of it.

As to the nature of the identification of spirits with celestial objects, both shaman and lay Indian are at one; but a difference seems to exist in their interpretation of the identification with stones, trees, etc. The shaman seems to identify spirits with the latter objects, while the layman apparently conceives them to be inhabited by spirits.

The sun, moon, and stars are among the most important spirits in America. So closely, however, have they been identified with these particular bodies, that no systematic attempt seems to have been made to transform them into true anthropomorphic spirits. These celestial bodies belong everywhere to the older strata of beliefs, and were in many tribes displaced by the development, on the part of the shaman, of other spirits. Wherever shamanistic systematization was at its highest, — among the Bellacoola, Ojibwa, Winnebago, Pawnee, Pueblo, Iroquois, etc., — there we find evidence of a former marked prominence of the sun. In the popular mind, as evidenced by some of the popular cults and the mythology, the sun always retained its prominence. Among the Natchez and in the civilizations of Mexico, the cult of the sun obtained so high a development that it displaced almost all others.

Monsters as spirits are found all over America. Perhaps the most characteristic of them all is the widespread Water-Spirit, also known as the Horned Snake and the Plumed Serpent. He unquestionably belongs to the old strata of beliefs, and, although adopted by the shaman everywhere, has undergone almost no recasting. Around his figure still cluster the whole mass of magico-folkloristic beliefs characteristic of the popular spirits. No attempt has been made to clarify this picture. He is always regarded as a more or less malign being, at war with the Thunder-Bird. It may be in consequence of this latter trait that he was so little appreciated by the shaman; for the Thunder-Bird is favored by the shaman and the people, and the old belief in the eternal enmity of the two beings must have meant the development of one at the expense of the other. Among the Winnebago a sort of rehabilitation and clarification of the Water-Spirit has taken place in connection with the origin legend of the Water-Spirit clan.

There is, however, another class of monster-spirits found in North America, whose origin does not lie so definitely in the popular folk-lore. As such we may cite the Eskimo Sedna and the Winnebago Disease-Giver. The latter is conceived of as human in shape, and as having his body divided into parts, one dealing out life, and the other death. This figure seems to me to be largely a development of the shaman, although it may be based on popular belief. According to the shaman, he is the cause of disease; but he has not succeeded in displacing the popular belief as to the cause of disease and death.

All of the spirits discussed are capable of taking an indefinite number of shapes. This power of transformation does not seem to be insisted upon as much by the shaman as by the lay Indian, due perhaps to their different standpoints. Naturally this power is possessed to its highest degree by spirits. But to the lay Indian the spirits are not merely beings from whom all blessings flow, but also heroes; and their infinite capacity for transformation is dwelt upon everlastingly as proof of their superior power. To the shaman as religious systematizer the spirits partake of the nature of deities, and their hero character is less important. The task they have before them is to define, co-ordinate, and classify the spirits. Emphasis upon their powers of transformation is not conducive to this. In defining them in prayers, in ritualistic speeches, etc., their character and the mode of representing them became fixed, and this literary fixation led to standardization in certain areas. Where artistic representation also occurred, the standardization was even more prominent. We have, then, to consider all these interpretations, each of which is partially true, and each of which has historically influenced the other, in our conception of the nature and figure of spirits.

3. THE POWER AND LOCALIZATION OF SPIRITS. — Spirits possess the power of bestowing upon man all those things that are of socio-economic value to him. These may vary from such very important things as rain or success on the war-path to the most insignificant trifles. Whether these powers are possessed collectively by a few spirits, or possessed singly by a large number, will be found to vary according to the degree of systematization the beliefs have undergone. Where this systematization is marked, the powers have become grouped together in the hands of a comparatively small number of spirits; and where this is not the case, the powers have been scattered over an enormous number. The same powers are frequently possessed by different spirits, due mainly to their number, their localization, and the influence of family groups and clans.

Historically the multiplicity of spirits may to a certain extent represent the influence of localization. As to the prevalence of the belief in the localization of spirits in North America, there can be little doubt. The prominence attached to the belief in "magic power" has obscured this fundamental conception. Any study of North-American religion based on mythology, ritualistic speeches, and personal experiences, will demonstrate this clearly. People are blessed by guardian spirits whose abode is a definite place in the near vicinity of their village, not by spirits who live somewhere in the universe. Among the Winnebago, the Ojibwa, the Omaha, there were as many spirits as there were lakes, hills, rivers, etc.; and each of these spirits possessed practically the same powers. Among the Eskimo the same

thing is true. According to Turner,¹ "every cove of the seashore, every point, island, and prominent rock, has its guardian spirit." Among the Takelma, according to Dr. Sapir, "a potent group of spirits are localized and associated with certain definite rocks, trees, or mountains. Direct offerings of food and other valuables seem often to have been deposited at the localities with which such beings were associated."² So thoroughly ingrown is, in fact, this localization in the popular mind, that the shamanistic systematization never made any real headway against it. Its spirit-deities never displaced the local *genii*, but at best were established at their side.

As in most other things, so here too there seems to be a difference between the lay Indian's conception of the powers associated with the spirits and the shaman's. The localized spirits are to the popular mind true *genii loci*, who are concerned not so much with granting power to man as with the protection of their respective precincts. The granting of powers to man is popularly believed to have been the work of the early culture-heroes. True, man never prayed to them for power; but then it had been given for all time when they transformed this world and made it habitable. If by offerings to the *genii loci* they could placate them and safely pass from place to place, then life was fairly secure. This apparent lack of positive relation of the *genii loci* to the socio-economic needs of man, I believe to have been the popular and earlier viewpoint.

Certain spirits — like the sun, moon, earth, stars, etc. — all belonging, according to our evidence, to the earlier strata of spirits, although they are of course not *genii loci* in the strict sense of the term, are looked upon, nevertheless, as being concerned with their own interests. Their own interests happen, however, to be of the utmost importance to man. Man's attitude toward them is sufficiently illustrated by the fact that he asks them not so much for power as for the continuance of their own strictly private functions. It is interesting to note that the same attitude, the main feature of which seems to be a lack of direct relation to man's needs, is characteristic of the tricksters and transformers of North-American mythology.

The shaman's viewpoint is characteristically different. To judge from those areas where our information is sufficiently definite, in particular from the Winnebago and Ojibwa, the emphasis on the association of the power to grant man all his socio-economic needs with the realization of the direct relationship between the maintenance of these needs and the spirits, is almost exclusively the work of the shaman. The function of the *genii loci* was transformed, or, better,

¹ L. M. Turner, "The Hudson Bay Eskimo" (11th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology).

² E. Sapir, "The Religious Ideas of the Takelma Indians" (Journal of American Folk-Lore, vol. xx, p. 35).

augmented. They still remained the guardians of their precincts, but, in addition, were regarded as the source of man's power throughout his life. The creative animal heroes had to give way to these newcomers as the original source of power, unless they were themselves elevated to the dignity of spirits.

Such are the two points of view prevalent in North America; and these should be carefully borne in mind if we wish to obtain a correct idea of the Indians' religion.

4. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPIRITS INTO DEITIES. — The conception of deities is quite clearly due to shamanistic systematization. From what were the deities developed? Doubtless to those ethnologists who believe firmly in the existence of a "magic power," the difference between spirits and deities is one of degree of individualization of the magic power. To me the facts seem to point toward a development in exactly the opposite direction. But to what are we to relate them, — to such spirits as sun, moon, stars; to the *genii loci*; or are we to regard them as new conceptions largely representing the reconstructions of the shaman? I believe an examination of the data points in all three directions.

Deities are found developed in practically all parts of North America, with the possible exception of interior and northern Canada and among the Plateau tribes. In certain sections — like the Northwest coast, the Plains Woodland, the Plains, California, the Southwest, and certain parts of the Eastern Woodlands — two types of deities are found; to wit, the trickster deity and the "pure" deity. The wide distribution of the trickster deity shows that it is not associated with any marked ritualistic development. To my mind it represents the shaman's acknowledgment of the power of popular beliefs, and likewise an admission that he too shares many of them. His reconstructed trickster is generally more consistent as a creator, more directly and consciously benevolent, but his origin is indicated in a number of features. Indeed, it could not be otherwise; for the shaman's re-interpretation is never thorough and complete, and, no matter how clarified his conception may be, the people as such have never lost their conception of the trickster. What appears to me a probable reason for the lack of remodelling of the trickster deity, at least in certain portions of America, is the fact that the shaman has developed another deity in which he was more interested. The trickster was probably always forced upon him to a certain degree. In certain sections of the Northwest coast and California where the second type of deity is not well developed, the trickster deity retains less of his primeval character: as, for instance, the raven among the Tlingit, Haida, and the Asiatic Chukchee; and the coyote among the Mewan. Conversely, the trickster nature of the deity, or perhaps

the influence of the trickster conception on the second type of deity, creeps out even when the deity has obtained so abstract a formulation as among the Chitimacha. Although he is spoken of here as "having neither eyes nor ears, but who sees, hears, and understands everything," he yet plays the rôle of trickster at the same time. One word of caution is necessary here: we may be dealing with information obtained from two sources, — the shamanistic and the popular.

Although, as we have pointed out before, the development of deities need not coincide with a marked development of ritualistic organization, it is frequently so associated; the Central Algonkin, some of the Eastern-Woodlands tribes, and California presenting a notable exception. This association is not due to the complexity of the ritual, but to the necessity of having founders and creators for the various rituals. These founders are for the most part trickster deities. Such, for instance, is the case with a number of the societies of the Northwest coast, the Winnebago, the Sauk and Fox, etc. We have thus two sources for the origin of the trickster deities, — the reconstructions of the individual shaman, and the desire of having a founder for a ritual or society.

The "pure" deities are quite clearly unrelated to the trickster or culture-hero. They may vary from such definite deities as the sun, moon, earth, star, etc., to such indefinite ones as the Great-Medicine of the Cheyenne, Ollebis ("Dwelling-on-High") and Namhlietawa ("Hurling-Left-Handed-to-the-West") of the Wintun, Shining-Heavens of the Haida, Tirawa of the Pawnee, Earth-Maker of the Winnebago, and the Good Spirit of the Ojibwa. Of these, certain ones (like the sun, etc.) belong, as we have seen, to the oldest possessions of the people; while the others seem at first glance to be largely reconstructions of the shamans, although, as we shall see later, this is only partially true. One difference between these two types appears fairly clear, — the sun, moon, etc., generally belong to a polytheistic phase in America, while the Great Medicine, etc., belong to a monotheistic phase. There are of course exceptions; such, for example, as the rôle of the sun among the Natchez, and that of Raven-at-the-Head-of-Nass among the Tlingit. The position of the former was due to the remarkable development of the sun cult among that people.

Let us examine the names of our deities more closely. Dwelling-on-High and Hurling-Left-Handed-to-the-West are descriptive terms from which nothing can be learned. The Good Spirit of the Ojibwa, we know, exists side by side with the Bad Spirit. Earth-Maker of the Winnebago is the only name that explains the function of the deity. This, however, is only one of his names. He is also known as the Creator and the Great Spirit. Like the Good Spirit of the Ojibwa, another spirit of equal rank appears in the mythology, called Herec-gunina, corresponding exactly to the Ojibwa Bad Spirit.

The Shining-Heavens of the Haida represents, in my opinion, merely a transformed older spirit. Dr. Swanton says, "He (Shining-Heavens) is the sky god, the highest deity anciently recognized by the Haida."¹ He goes on to say, "Siñ, the name by which he is known, is the ordinary word for 'day,' as distinguished from 'night' or from an entire period of twenty-four hours which also is called 'night;' but it seems to be more strictly applied to the sky as it is illuminated by sunshine." This explanation is, I believe, far-fetched. Siñ is apparently identical with the Winnebago *hāp* and the Tciwere (Oto, Iowa and Missouri) *hape*, which means "day." There is also a very important deity by this name. *Hāp*, however, has two other secondary meanings, — that of "light air, heavens," and that of "life." In view of the remarkable correspondence of the Haida and Winnebago deities, may we not legitimately identify the two? Siñ would then simply be an old spirit deity who has been transformed into a supreme deity.

The names of these deities show clearly that we are to look for their origin neither in the older spirits (like sun, moon, etc.) nor in the *genii loci*. Where, then, are we to look? There seem to me to be three sources of origin, — the generic *genii loci*, the dual creators, and the shamanistic reconstructions.

Among the Tlingit we are told that there were "one principal and several subordinate spirits in everything." A similar conception exists among the Eskimo, the Asiatic Chukchee, the Winnebago, etc. What we find here is a localization of authority. There was at all times an inequality in the importance of the *genii loci*. The *genii loci* of the trees were subject to the *genius loci* of all the trees within a certain area, etc. This conception is quite similar to that of the spirit-animal mentioned before. We are not dealing here, however, with an abstraction for the purpose of subjecting a number of individual entities to some unifying principle, but clearly with generic *genii loci*. It is from this generic *genius loci* that, in my opinion, such deities as the Hard-Being-Woman of the Hopi, the Spider-Woman of the Pueblos, Sedna of the Eskimo, the Water-Spirit of the Winnebago, etc., were developed. All these deities have, of course, undergone considerable re-interpretation and clarification at the hands of the shaman.

Dual creators — or, better, dual transformers — are found in all parts of America. They are a common feature of all their mythologies. Frequently three, four, or five transformers are found, depending upon the sacred number of the tribe. Among the Winnebago, for instance, there are four. The dual creators are generally regarded as equal in

¹ J. R. Swanton, *Haida Texts and Myths* (Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 29, p. 30).

power; but one is supposed to be more benevolent than another, and more directly interested in furthering the needs of man. In many areas this antagonism in the character of the dual deities developed a marked Good Spirit and Bad Spirit. This is typical, for instance, of the Central Algonkin, Winnebago, Omaha, etc. This postulation of a Good Spirit and a Bad Spirit was not developed by the shaman. It seems to be one of the fundamental folkloristic conceptions of the North American Indians. The Good Spirit and Bad Spirit are merely the spirits-in-chief of the numerous good and bad spirits.

Let us see now what the shamanistic reconstructions have done with these dual deities. Where the systematization was very strong, — as, for instance, among the Pawnee and Winnebago, — the Bad Spirit has disappeared completely. Among the Winnebago he is still found, however, in the popular cycles. He has, it is true, degenerated into a sorry figure; but Earth-Maker confesses himself powerless to destroy him. Among the Pawnee, Tirawa reigns supreme; and there seem to be only hints as to the earlier existence of a rival.

5. MONOTHEISM. — The belief in a single supreme deity is not very common in America. The nearest approach to it is Tirawa of the Pawnee. According to Mr. Grinnell, he is "an intangible spirit, omnipotent and beneficent. He pervades the universe and is its supreme ruler. Upon his will depends everything that happens. He can bring good or bad; can give success or failure. Everything rests with him. . . . Nothing is undertaken without a prayer to the Father for assistance. When the pipe is lighted the first whiffs are blown to the deity. When food is eaten, a small portion of it is placed on the ground as a sacrifice to him."¹ Such a conception is quite rare. If, however, we take the belief in a single God to mean the belief in a mildly benevolent creator, who may or may not be the creator of all deities and spirits, to whom offerings are made similar in nature to those made to the other spirits, the conception, though not common, is found among the Californian tribes, the Bellacoola, the Central Algonkin, the Woodland-Plains, some of the Plains, and some of the Southwestern tribes.

As to the origin of the idea of a single deity, there is little doubt in my mind that it is to be sought in the older belief in the Good Spirits and Bad Spirits, and probably represents the complete displacement of the latter. The non-ritualistic myths and the popular beliefs bear this out amply. The single deity never seems to have become very popular. He was, for instance, rarely appealed to directly by the average man; and it is only by a *tour de force* that he appears as a guardian spirit. In fact, though based on a popular belief, he is a thoroughly shamanistic construction.

¹ G. B. Grinnell, "Pawnee Mythology" (*Journal of American Folk-Lore*, vol. vi, p. 113).

To what extent Christianity has influenced the development of the Good Spirit into a supreme deity, it is difficult to determine. Its influence must have been considerable in certain areas. However, as we have tried to show, it is not necessary to call in the aid of Christian influence to account for the origin of the idea of a single supreme deity.

II. THE RELATION OF SPIRITS TO MAN.

I. THE TWOFOLD INTERPRETATION OF THIS RELATION. — Among all North American tribes there is always to be found an unsystematized postulation of a purely mechanical relation between man and the spirits or deities. If certain conditions are fulfilled, the blessing will flow mechanically, quite independent of the volition of the spirits. If, for instance, the Winnebago make the necessary offerings of tobacco and eagle-feathers to the Thunder-Birds, and they accept them, they must grant man those powers which they possess. Theoretically the spirits have the alternative of accepting or refusing these offerings; but there is something so inherently tempting in the tobacco, eagle-feathers, etc., that very few spirits are credited with sufficient strength of character to refuse. As an instructive example of this attitude, I might cite the following incident in a Winnebago myth. The Winnebago are offering tobacco to the Buffalo spirits, and the smoke is ascending through a hole in the sky to the home of these spirits. The younger Buffaloes cannot resist the temptation of approaching the opening to catch a few whiffs of their favorite tobacco. They are thereupon warned by the older Buffaloes not to go too close, for the tobacco fumes might tempt them too strongly; and should they succumb and accept the offerings, then they would have to appear on earth and be killed.

This interpretation of the relation of the spirits to man is the popular one, that of the unreligious man. Alongside of it arose another closely allied historically. The popular interpretation was only in a vague way a cause-and-effect relation. It remained for the shaman to emphasize this latter fact, to give a reason for the spirits' fondness for tobacco, to grant the spirits a certain amount of volition, and finally to insist upon certain qualifications on the part of the suppliants. A certain precision in the manner of making offerings was probably always present. The mechanical interpretation gave way to what might be called a "contract" theory. The spirits possessed the various powers without which man could achieve only a modicum of success; and man possessed tobacco, corn, eagle-feathers, buckskin, etc. Man would give the spirits tobacco, etc.; and the spirits would give man the powers they controlled. Accompanying this change of interpretation, there was a difference of attitude. The mechanical

interpretation demanded but a modicum of religious feeling; the "contract" interpretation was heavily charged with it.

2. GUARDIAN SPIRITS. — One of the fundamental features of North American religion is the marked projection of even the most minute socio-economic life-values into the idea of spirits and deities. It is probably for this reason that the relation of spirits to man is so intimate. There is no aloofness, such as we find in many modern religions. This intimate and direct relationship is of utmost importance; for to it and to the belief in *genii loci* was due the most characteristic feature of Indian religion, namely, the development of the idea of guardian spirits. If the *genii loci* played no rôle in the development of the conception of deities, it is perhaps largely due to the fact that they had already been requisitioned for the elaboration of this idea of guardian spirit. Very little was necessary to accomplish the transformation of the *genius loci* into the guardian spirit. The idea of guardian and protector of the precinct, as such, had but to be extended so as to include all those who lived in that precinct, both individually and collectively. I think it would be a mistake to assume offhand, that, strictly speaking, each individual had, or could have had, a distinctly different guardian spirit. The evidence accumulating now, although it will never be conclusive, points unmistakably to an association of guardian spirits with families or even larger groups. It is not to be supposed that there was an inheritance of such spirits, however, but rather a tendency to acquire those spirits who had proved their usefulness and power by the blessings they had given to older members of the family. This tendency toward inheritance becomes especially marked in those areas where the guardian spirit is associated with certain definite powers, like success in hunting, etc.¹

The only satisfactory method of describing the nature of the guardian spirits is to give a few fasting experiences *in extenso*. I will select such as bring out all the various aspects of this belief.

(A)² "Shanapow, when a young boy, commenced fasting for his fortune. . . . He fasted eight days without eating, till he got very weak. On the eighth night he dreamed that one of the sacred monsters who lived in the falls appeared and told him, 'Look yonder and you will see something laced there as your reward for fasting,' indicating a rock in the centre of the falls. The whole earth looked transparent, and he went to the rock island, going over ice. When he got there he discovered a sacred kettle which was as bright as fire. It was a bear kettle from the underneath god to feed from when a sacrifice feast was given. 'Now,' said the god, 'go a short distance and you will find there what is granted you. You will then break your fast and eat.' So Shanapow went and found a large bear which he killed and made a sacrifice of, and then ate with others whom he invited."

¹ The powers associated with the guardian spirits, and the method of acquisition of the guardian spirits, will be treated in other sections.

² Alanson Skinner, *Social Life and Ceremonial Bundles of the Menomini Indians* (Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, vol. xiii, part i).

(B)¹ "When I was ten years old, my grandmother wanted me to fast, so that I might know what blessing I was to receive. I was to start in the autumn of the year. At first I was to get just a little to eat and drink in the morning and evening. This meagre diet was to continue all through the autumn and winter. In the spring a little wigwam was built for me on a scaffold, not very far from the ground. In this wigwam I was to stay ten days and nights, and only get a little to eat in the mornings and evenings. My grandmother told me before entering not to believe every spirit that would come to me with promises, for there are some who try to deceive people, and only to accept the blessings of that spirit who came with a great noise and power.

"The first and second night I did not dream of anything, but during the third night a very rich man came to me and asked me to go along with him and that he would give me all the riches I wanted. I went along with him, but I did not accept what he offered me, and returned to my wigwam. Then I looked in the direction in which . . . he was disappearing, . . . and I saw that he had changed into an owl, and that the lodge that I had visited with him was a hollow tree with holes. The next night another rich man came to me, dressed in a suit of red material. He offered me the same things as the first man, and in addition told me that if I accepted his blessings I could change my clothes twice a year. After I refused he told me to look in his direction as he left me; and as I did so, I saw nothing but oak trees and dry and green leaves. The next night another man came and offered me boxes of sugar. I went with him, too, but I refused his blessing; and when I turned to look at him as he left, just as I had done in the other cases, I only saw a large maple-tree.

"My grandmother came twice a day to ask me about what I had dreamt and to give me something to eat. I told her about my dreams, and she again told me to accept the blessing of no one but the spirit who came to me with a great noise and strength. Some night before the tenth I heard the noise of a gush of wind above me and saw a very stout and strong man. With this man I went towards the north, and finally came to nine old men sitting around a circle. In the centre sat a very old man, and this was the man who blessed me. He told me that he had just been sent down from above. Then I was brought back to my little wigwam and told to look in the direction in which my guide was going. When he had gone some distance, I looked and I saw a number of large white stones in a circle and one in the centre of this circle. The next morning when my grandmother came to feed me and question me, I told her of what I had dreamt. That was the end of my fasting."

(C)² "One time in a dream the Sun came to me and said, 'Look at the old woman's face (moon)!' I looked and saw that she had turned her back, but I saw through her head. I could see the paint on her face. There was a black spot on her nose, and a ring over her forehead, cheeks, and chin. Then the Sun said, 'Look at my face! This is the way you are to paint your face. You must always wear a cap made of running fisher-

¹ P. Radin, *Some Aspects of Puberty Fasting among the Ojibwa* (Museum Bulletin No. 2, Anthropological Series No. 2, Geological Survey of Canada).

² C. Wissler, *Ceremonial Bundles of the Blackfoot Indians* (Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, vol. vii, p. 74).

skin with one feather. This cap is to be like the one I now wear. If you do this, you shall have power to turn away rain."

The foregoing fasting-experiences show clearly what powers are supposed to be possessed by guardian spirits. Of any attitude of veneration felt for the spirits by the fasters, I cannot detect the slightest trace. A religious thrill there certainly has been at all times, depending in intensity on the age and temperament of the faster. On the whole, however, we are dealing with a stereotyped explanation of success in life. It might be said to read as follows: "I am a successful hunter; I am a prominent warrior, etc.; and I am told that I have become such because I have done what my elders told me, — have practised these professions diligently, and made offerings to the spirits." The formula is put in the mouth of the youth; but it means nothing until it is interpreted much later in terms of each man's experience in life. It is because this formula has been tested by the results obtained, and found correct, that it is accepted and perpetuated.

The guardian spirit is not supposed to be in permanent attendance upon man. It is only when he is needed, in the crises of life, that he is brought into relation with man; and it is quite characteristic of the markedly materialistic basis of the belief that the spirit is only called into aid for the particular needs of each case. If it is a warpath that is to be undertaken, then the individual will demand such and such honors and safety for himself and the precise number of men accompanying him. Frequently his fasting-experiences will be carefully tested by the elders; and if found wanting in any respect, he will be restrained from going. This is of course merely another way of saying that the man was either too young or inexperienced for such an undertaking, or that the enemy were perhaps too powerful, etc. The fact that the Indians expressed this in religious terms should not blind us to the fact that they realized quite well that they were dealing with a purely mundane affair, and that mundane facts were to be given the greatest consideration.

III. THE METHODS OF BRINGING SPIRITS INTO RELATION WITH MAN.

I. FASTING. — There seem to be two marked methods of bringing spirits into relation with man, — the one magical, and the other religious. Here we are concerned only with the religious. In the discussion of the latter, two things are to be borne in mind, — first, that it means essentially a method of superinducing a religious feeling; and, secondly, that religious feeling is bound up with the desire for preserving and perpetuating socio-economic life-values.

On the whole, religious feeling was superinduced in the customary way, by fasting, self-castigation, etc.; but the characteristic method

was fasting. In America fasting was undergone for a definite reason; namely, to superinduce religious feeling, which psychologically meant a state of mind in which the world of sense-impressions was shut out, and in which auto-suggestion and hallucinations were predominant. The desirability for such a state of mind lay not so much in the emotional pleasure it gave the Indian as in the belief that such a state of mind was essential for placing him in a position to overcome certain crises in his life which it was reasonable to anticipate would develop. He believed that fasting would accomplish this, because he was told so by the shaman and his elders.

If primarily religious feeling was evoked by the contemplation of the goods of this world and the desirability of possessing them in full measure, secondarily it was called forth by the belief in spirits possessed of powers that would make the question of acquiring these goods easy. If to us it seems that in the formula of fasting the relation to spirits is the essential thing, this is due to the fact that we are misled by the state of mind of the faster and our own religious bringing-up.

2. "MENTAL CONCENTRATION." — Among the Winnebago and Ojibwa, and I have reason to believe among other tribes, the efficacy of a blessing, of a ceremony, etc., depended upon what the Indians called "concentrating your mind" upon the spirits, upon the details of the ritual, or upon the precise purpose to be accomplished. All other thoughts were to be strictly excluded. The insistent admonition of the Winnebago elders is that the youth, in his fasting, centre his mind completely on the spirits, and that his blessing will vary in direct proportion to the concentration he has been capable of. It was believed that the relation between man and the spirits was established by this "concentration," and that no manner of care in ritualistic detail could take its place. Very frequently failure on a warpath or lack of efficacy of a ritual was attributed to the fact that the Indian or Indians had been lacking in the intensity of their "concentration." There are indications that this "concentration" played an important part in a number of purely magical rites among the Winnebago and Ojibwa. Thus among the former there was a special ceremony connected with the obtaining of animals, which consisted simply in "setting your mind" upon them. It is probable, therefore, that "concentration" was originally a purely magical device that was re-interpreted and included in the religious complex by the shaman.

3. SELF-CASTIGATION AND TORTURE. — There seems to be little doubt that both self-castigation and torture were originally unconnected with the religious complex. The idea that a relation between man and spirits could be established with their aid, is always a special and shamanistic interpretation. Neither self-castigation nor torture are commonly found associated in North America with religion.

They form prominent elements, however, in the religious complex associated with the Sun Dance of the Plains Indians, the Mandan Okeepa and ceremonies of the Mexican Indians.

4. OFFERINGS AND SACRIFICES. — The theory on which the Indians made offerings has been touched on before. It is what Tylor calls the "gift-theory." Of his "homage" and "abnegation-theory," I cannot find any trace in North America.

Offerings were made to spirits, the dwelling-place of spirits, or objects in any way connected with spirits. What was sacrificed depended largely upon the pursuits of the people and custom. To different spirits different articles were frequently given, but all received tobacco. Among most tribes, food-animals — such as deer, elk, moose, buffalo, etc. — were offered. Among the Woodland and Woodland-Plains tribes, white dogs were sacrificed. Human sacrifices were found only among the Pawnee. As is well known, they were common in Mexico. The method of sacrifice varied. When the offerings were made to spirits, food was either put for them at certain places or partaken of by the Indians themselves upon the supposition that the spirits either partook only of the spirit of the food or were present invisibly as feasters. When the offerings were made to places supposed to be the abode of spirits, or to objects connected with them, they were placed near them. Offerings to the *genii loci* were made whenever an individual passed their precincts. To the more important spirits and deities, sacrifices were made at definite times or when ceremonies were performed. Any individual could make offerings. On certain occasions — such, for instance, as before starting out on a war-expedition, at specific ceremonies, etc. — this function devolved upon special individuals.

5. PRAYERS AND INCANTATIONS. — "Prayers may either be spoken words, or they may be expressed by symbolic objects placed so that they convey the wishes of the worshipper to the powers."¹ The latter type is found only among the Pueblo Indians. Prayers accompany practically all sacrifices and ceremonies. In the rituals of the North Pacific coast Indians they are, however, rare. The objects of prayer are always those socio-economic life-values to which importance is attached in any given area. What in these values is stressed depends, to a certain extent, upon the ambitions of the individual, and consequently it happens at times that individuals may pray for abstract blessings or for ideal objects. Prayers are always accompanied by a religious feeling when made by the shaman, but frequently become mere formulas in the hands of the lay Indian. In such cases their efficacy will generally be regarded as depending upon the correctness with

¹ F. Boas, article "Prayer," in *Handbook of American Indians* (Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30, Part 2).

which they are repeated. When the prayer takes a ritualistic form and is regarded as efficacious in itself, it becomes an incantation, and properly belongs to the domain of magic. This seems to be characteristic of prayers in northern California and among the Eskimo, but is frequently found elsewhere.

6. CHARMS AND FETICHES. — Charms and fetiches are employed in many parts of North America as a means of establishing a relationship between man and spirits. These charms and fetiches are either regarded as the gift of the spirits, the dwelling-place of the spirits, or are connected intimately with them in some way. They belong largely, however, to the domain of magic, and may be regarded as having been secondarily associated with the religious complex. The main element in this transformation from magic to religion was probably the definite interpretation of the relation of the charm to the results obtained. For the purely mechanical or perhaps coercive relation, the shaman substituted the religious relation.¹

IV. THE FOLKLORISTIC-RELIGIOUS COMPLEX.²

I. THE CONCEPT OF EVIL. — It is generally supposed that the Indians' actions are regulated "by the desire to retain the good will of those [spirits] friendly to him, and to control those that are hostile." This suggests a clear concept of evil, and seems justified when we remember that almost every tribe postulates its good and bad spirits. An examination of North American data, however, shows that while the Indians do speak of the existence of bad spirits, with the exception of the Eskimo, these spirits seem to exercise little influence upon their lives. Evil would most assuredly befall individuals who, for instance, fasted at the wrong time, or who accepted blessings from spirits when they were expressly warned against them; but people seem to have been quite careful to heed these warnings. In the vast majority of cases, evil seems to result either from inability to obtain protection or from infringement of rules. Thus, if an individual succumbs during one of life's crises, it is not because of an evil spirit, but because he failed to provide himself with the means of protecting himself on such an occasion. There is another kind of evil, however, besides that which is connected with inability to obtain protection from the spirits; and that is the evil caused by definite individuals. Such individuals claim to have received the power of inflicting injury from the spirits. This does not mean, however, that

¹ It might be well to mention here the idea that spirits may be propitiated if offended by transgressions of certain rules. The most important of these means of propitiation is confession, which is found among the Eskimo, Iroquois, and Athapascan. It has lately developed among the Winnebago, but it may be due there to the influence of Christianity.

² Under this heading we shall concern ourselves entirely with the folkloristic-religious concepts.

bad spirits blessed them. The power to inflict evil is one of the powers that men may covet and that all spirits may grant.

Summing up, we may say that in practice the Indian does not deal with the evil spirits he unquestionably postulates, but that the same spirit may be connected with good as with evil. It may very well be that in this twofold aspect of the spirits we still see the reflection of an older concept of the spirits in which they, like the tricksters, were not concerned with the weal or woe of man, but their own interests; and that whatever evil or good man obtained through them was indirect.

2. THE CONCEPT OF DISEASE. — Disease is conceived of in a variety of ways. It may be due to a general lack of protection, to the presence of a material object in the body, to the absence of the soul from the body, or rarely to the action of a spirit who distributes it. I believe it is a fundamental belief in North America that disease is natural to man, and that without the spirits' protection he will most assuredly become ill on numerous occasions in life. The specific disease itself is caused by some individual who has caused a material object to enter another person's body or has abstracted his soul. I know of only one case in North America where disease is conceived of as being incarnated in a spirit or deity; and that is among the Winnebago, where the curious deity known as Disease-Giver is found.

Disease is associated with the religious complex, because those individuals who are conceived of as causing and curing it are supposed to have obtained their powers from spirits. This inclusion represents undoubtedly the activity of those shamans with whom the function of curing disease became definitely associated. For the majority of lay Indians, I feel confident, disease was regarded as being caused and cured by purely magical methods.

3. THE CONCEPT OF DEATH, AFTER-LIFE, AND RE-INCARNATION. — Death was everywhere conceived of as a cessation of life on this earth, and a cessation of certain kinds of intercourse between the individual who had died and living individuals. It was not, however, considered by any means as a cessation of all kinds of intercourse. It could not be staved off entirely; but it could be staved off for a larger or smaller number of years, depending upon the nature of the blessings an individual received, his participation in certain ceremonies, the nature of his offerings to the spirits, etc. Death was regarded as having originated in a number of ways at the beginning of the world, the reasons given being generally folkloristic ones. At times it is not accounted for at all.

After death, an individual was supposed to travel to a spirit-land much the same as ours, and to remain there. This journey to the spirit-land is regarded as being beset with many dangers, to overcome which the aid of the living is necessary. Among certain tribes the

belief is found that only individuals who have led an upright life are able to reach the spirit-land; but among most tribes this is apparently not the case, and the ability to reach the spirit-land depends upon a variety of causes. Among the Winnebago, for instance, if one of the warriors invited to a wake boasts of his war-exploits, the individual who has died will fall over one of the precipices on the spirit-road; and among the Ojibwa, all infants are doomed to die on the road, because they are unable to balance themselves successfully on the slippery bridge that spans one of the rivers that have to be crossed. The life that is led in the spirit-land is one of unadulterated joy. Individuals are much the same as when they lived on earth, except that among many tribes a person is believed to appear there in the precise bodily form in which he died. If he had been scalped, if his head had been cut off, if he had been wounded in a certain way, etc., he would continue his existence in the spirit-land in that shape.

Among most tribes a belief in re-incarnation is present in varying degrees. It is especially prominent among the Sauk and Fox, Winnebago, and Omaha. Only shamans and prominent warriors were generally regarded as being able to become re-incarnated, as a rule, although among the Winnebago it was associated with death on the warpath and membership in the Medicine Dance. The following Winnebago account will bring out most of the salient features connected with this belief.

"I came from above, and I am holy. This is my second life on earth. Many years before my present existence I lived on this earth. At that time every one seemed to be on the warpath. I also was a warrior and a brave man. Once when I was on the warpath I was killed. It seemed to me, however, as if I had only stumbled. I rose and went right ahead until I reached my home. There I found my wife and children, but they would not look at me. Then I spoke to my wife, but she seemed to be quite unaware of my presence. What can be the matter? I thought. . . . Finally it occurred to me that I might in reality be dead, so I returned to the battle-field; and, surely enough, there I saw my body. . . . After that I tried for four years to return to my home, but I was unsuccessful.

"After a while I became transformed into a fish. Their life is much worse than ours, for they are frequently in lack of food. . . . At another time I became transformed into a bird, and at still another time into a buffalo. From my buffalo existence I was permitted to go to my spirit-home. The one in charge of that home is my grandfather, and I asked him for permission to return to this earth again. At first he refused, but after a while he consented. Before I left, he told me, 'Grandson, before you go, you had better have the spirits bless you, so that you will be able to live in peace on the earth.' There I fasted for four years. . . . Then I came to this earth again. When I came here, I entered a lodge and was born there. I thought that I was entering a lodge, but I was in reality entering my mother's womb. Even in my prenatal existence I never lost consciousness."

4. THE CONCEPT OF THE SOUL. — According to Professor Boas, there are three mental processes upon which the ideas relating to the soul are based, — “the formation of the concept of ‘power of acting’ resident in a body, but distinct from the existence of the body; the formation of concepts due to the subjective feelings connected with imagery; and that of others due to the objective impressions made by memory-images.”¹ The soul is regarded as invisible to all except shamans. To them it appears in different forms. Among the Nootka it is supposed to be a tiny man. The same belief occurred among the Huron and Eskimo. Among the Central Algonkin and Winnebago it is like a shadow; among the Shasta it is recognized only by its trail and footprints; and among the Tsimshian and Bellacoola it is supposed to be a butterfly or bird.²

V. THE TRANSMISSION OF THE RELIGIOUS COMPLEX.

The religious complex is transmitted by the shaman and the lay Indian. In the case of the shaman it may be said to be almost inherited. Every shaman has the natural desire to have one of his children inherit all his supernatural powers; and to do so he surrounds him with conditions that make it practically certain that the son will be blessed in the same way as he was. Practically the son inherits these powers, but only that son who duplicates the religious conditions his father submitted to when he was blessed; and consequently only that son who shows special aptitude and conscientious endeavor will obtain them. The religious intensity of the shaman, and the conservatism with which his religious complex is handed down, are due, therefore, to the conscious selection of specially-endowed individuals from generation to generation, often within a small number of families.³

Among a number of tribes the objective content of the religious complex is purchased. Among the Winnebago and Ojibwa, for instance, those individuals who were not able to obtain blessings directly from the spirits would buy certain “blessings” from their more fortunate brethren. Among the Blackfoot and Arapaho any blessing could be purchased; but it seems that great care was exercised that the purchaser be a suitable person. A strong religious feeling seems to have accompanied purchased blessings among the Blackfoot and Arapaho, but among the Winnebago it was very weak. In both cases, however, the efficacy of these purchased blessings was due to the fact that originally they were obtained from the spirits in the proper way.

¹ F. Boas, article “Soul,” in *Handbook of American Indians* (Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30, Part 2).

² Compare also further discussion of the soul in the article quoted above, from which these statements have been taken.

³ P. Radin, “Introduction to the Study of Ojibwa Religion” (*Papers and Records of the Ontario Historical Society*, vol. xii).

What the lay Indian transmitted was the objective content of religion; and this had a tendency, in his hands, to develop into formulas. While these were handed down unchanged from generation to generation, the folkloristic background exerted its influence in interpretations and by new accretions.

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